

II. REMARKS

In the Office Action dated January 14, 2003, the Examiner has identified claims 1-14 and 36, claims 15-27 and 37, and claims 28-34 and 37-38 as being subject to restriction or election requirement, on the basis that they are respectively directed to three patentably distinct inventions.

Pursuant to a review of the claims of the application as they stood immediately prior to this amendment, the Applicant believes that the Examiner may have erred in identifying those claims supposedly directed to the third invention. It is respectfully submitted that the third group of claims should consist of claims 28-35 and 38, as opposed to claims 28-34 and 37-38, since claim 37 has been found by the Examiner to be directed to the second invention.

In response to the Examiner's requisition under 35 U.S.C. §121, the Applicant formally elects Invention I, claims 1-14 and 36 being readable thereon, for prosecution on the merits.

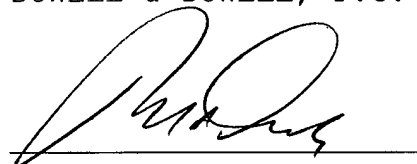
Accordingly the Applicant has withdrawn claims 15-35 and 37-38 from the patent application. The Applicant respectfully reserves the right to pursue any or all of the non-elected claims in one or more divisional applications that may be filed prior to the issuance to patent of the present application.

III. CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is submitted that claims 1-14 and 36 are in condition for allowance. Allowance of claims 1-14 and 36 at an early date is solicited.

If the claims of the application are not believed to be in full condition for allowance, for any reason, the Applicant respectfully requests the constructive assistance and suggestions of the Examiner in drafting one or more acceptable claims or in making constructive suggestions so that the application can be placed in allowable condition as soon as possible and without the need for further proceedings.

Respectfully submitted,
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